

# Social intervention program for observation and resolution of school conflict in Colombia

Programa de intervención social para observación y solución del conflicto escolar en Colombia

Programa de intervenção social para observação e resolução de conflitos escolares na Colômbia

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** This article analyzes the effect of a social intervention program on conflict resolution skills and reasoning to observe school conflict in secondary school students from Barranquilla, Colombia. **Method:** A pre-experimental quantitative method is applied through a pre-test and post-test questionnaires to 81 students, 50.6 % women and 49.4 % men. **Results:** The social intervention program had as a result a great improvement in the reasoning of the students to observe the conflict with a change in means from 2.27 to 1.86, with Wilcoxon's W of 720, an effect size (EZ = .846) and a p value of .001, while there was a median improvement in the skills developed by the students for conflict resolution with M pretest = 2.43 to M posttest 2.17, W = 466, EZ = .566 and p value = .002. **Conclusions:** The reasoning to observe the conflict and the skills developed for the resolution of conflicts by the students can be stimulated through activities that train them in the recognition of conflicts and allow them to identify the tools they have to solve them. The results suggest that this type of intervention should be developed institutionally and permanently to modify the way students resolve conflicts and improve the school coexistence.

**Keywords:** Conflict and peace; School coexistence; Social intervention; Skills; Reasoning

## Resumen

**Introducción:** El artículo analiza el efecto de un programa de intervención social para medir las habilidades de resolución de conflicto y el razonamiento de observarlos con estudiantes de tres escuelas secundarias de Barranquilla (Colombia). **Método:** Se aplica un método cuantitativo pre experimental aplicando un cuestionario pretest y postest a 81 estudiantes, siendo un 50,6 % mujeres y un 49,4 % hombres. **Resultados:** El programa de intervención social genera una gran mejora en el razonamiento de los estudiantes para observar el conflicto con cambio en las medias de 2,27 a 1,86, con W de Wilcoxon de 720 y un tamaño del efecto (TE = 0,846) y un p valor de 0,001, mientras se presentó una mediana mejoría en las habilidades desarrolladas por los alumnos para la resolución de conflictos con M pretest = 2,43 a M postest 2,17, W = 466, TE = 0,566 y p valor= 0,002. **Conclusiones:** Las variables observadas para la resolución de conflictos pueden ser estimuladas a través de actividades que los entrenen en el reconocimiento del conflicto y les permita identificar herramientas con las que cuentan para resolverlos. Los resultados sugieren que este tipo de intervención se desarrolle de manera institucional y permanente para mejorar la forma de solucionar los conflictos en estudiantes y mejorar la convivencia escolar.

**Palabras clave:** Conflicto y paz; Convivencia escolar; Intervención social; Habilidades; Razonamiento<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Los términos clave han sido recuperados a partir del Tesauro de la Unesco.

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## Resumo

**Introdução:** O artigo analisa o efeito de um programa de intervenção social para medir as habilidades de resolução de conflitos e o raciocínio para observar conflitos com alunos de três escolas secundárias de Barranquilla (Colômbia). **Método:** Um método quantitativo pré-experimental é aplicado através de questionários pré-teste e pós-teste a 81 estudantes, 50,6% mulheres e 49,4% homens. **Resultados:** O programa de intervenção social gera uma grande melhoria no raciocínio dos alunos para observar o conflito com mudança nas médias de 2,27 para 1,86, com W de Wilcoxon de 720 e tamanho de efeito (TE = 0,846) e valor de p de 0,001, enquanto houve melhora média nas habilidades desenvolvidas pelos alunos para resolução de conflitos com M pré-teste = 2,43 para M pós-teste 2,17, W = 466, TE = 0,566 e valor de p = 0,002. **Conclusões:** As variáveis observadas para a resolução de conflitos podem ser estimuladas através de atividades que os treinem no reconhecimento dos conflitos e lhes permitam identificar as ferramentas de que dispõem para resolvê-los. Os resultados sugerem que este tipo de intervenção seja desenvolvida de forma institucional e permanente para melhorar a forma de resolução de conflitos dos alunos e melhorar a convivência escolar.

**Palavras-chave:** Conflito e paz; Convivência escolar; Intervenção social; Habilidades; Raciocínio.



## Introduction

In recent studies that *Bullying Without Borders* published in its statistical data on *bullying* in Colombia between 2020 and 2021, a total of 8981 serious cases of *bullying* were evidenced, which indicates that Colombia has a significant number of these given the population index and the number of students at primary and secondary level (*Bullying Without Borders*, 2021).

Given this perspective of the daily reality of coexistence in schools, and the fact that the educational community has paid special attention to evaluating the programs, it is necessary to provide feedback to these programs with a view to regulating the pacification of conflicts in schools, since education and the recognition of emotions are increasingly incorporated in society and in educational systems as valuable resources for increasing socio-affective skills (Domínguez Santiago et al., 2023).

In the literature, studies are identified that modify the orthodox forms of conflict resolution in which the solver was an authority figure such as the teacher (Miranda Medina et al., 2022), the prefect or discipline coordinator; however, the processes today have focused more on the development of skills so that students can resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. Evidence of this is the work of Msila (2019), who in a case study explored the desired skills of school administrators and their staff in conflict management, and concluded that dispute management should not be the prerogative of school principals, as all teachers are conflict managers and promoters of change.

This is how the literature describes the strengthening of skills in the relationship with conflict, promoting processes of identification of components, factors, internal and external elements, experiences and the proposal of possible solutions to disputes throughout the academic community (Miranda Medina et al., 2020).

Studies are also identified that examine skill building and social and emotional learning for coping with school conflict. Ingram et al. (2021) examine through action research the impact of a STEM + Social Emotional Learning curriculum intervention to address a real-world school conflict. They also develop a proposal for teaching conflict coping skills, including strategies for self-control and anger management, self-control of feelings, and interpersonal problem solving, fostered through the use of interactive theater and role-playing (Graves et al., 2007).

Conflict resolution skills training also focuses on promoting philosophical thinking toward values and the role of the school in fostering resilience in students. Serrano Sarmiento and Sanz Ponce (2019) propose resilience as a mechanism that the school and the teacher can use to help students develop the capacity to face conflicts in a proactive and prosocial way, providing them with coping strategies and social and personal skills. For his part, Velasco Moreno (2021) promotes critical thinking, mainly in primary school children, as a response to the growing problem of school conflicts inside and outside the classroom, through the application of philosophy for children, based on the analysis of everyday situations, some of them turned into anecdotes, where the teacher promotes thinking skills that argue them and manage to go through the nuance of criticism.

The development of coping skills for school-work conflict is also investigated through subjective well-being and the proposed dynamic change model. A longitudinal weekly diary study was developed to examine change in work-school conflict that can predict changes in negative emotions and workplace deviance based on the stress-emotion model of counterproductive work behavior (Peng et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Adebayo et al. (2008) examine the effects of engaging in two domains: work and school, on subjective well-being and work-school conflict, as well as the moderating role of proactive coping between these two variables in Nigerian non-traditional students.

On the other hand, studies were found that measure student satisfaction in relation to university goods, where students are in less aggressive environments and aspects such as trust, safety, satisfaction and social responsibility are measured, which brings benefits through university management (Olivero-Vega et al., 2022; Melamed-Varela et al., 2021).

School mediation as a method of dispute resolution becomes an element of the conception of justice and the meaning that students give to mediation. A study is identified that sought to know the valuation of mediation by peer mediators, assigning it the contribution to meaning through increased positive leadership and an improvement in their social and emotional skills, while encouraging altruism in different environments from the perspective of students (García-Raga et al., 2018). The analysis of a school-based peer mediation program implemented as an alternative way to manage bullying and other destructive conflicts was also identified, which evidences that school conflict resolution and peer mediation can have implications for the understanding and development of legal processes and law in general (McWilliam, 2010).

Another factor to consider is student leadership as an ability to resolve conflicts in schools. Conflicts between students and schools often lead to organizational change by making the status quo intolerable, this facilitates constructive resolution of conflicts in ways that promote organizational growth and development (Johnson, 1971). A study was found that described the conflict management style and strategies that educational leaders use to manage conflicts in two elementary and secondary schools, as well as teachers' and students' perceptions of the conflict management styles and strategies used in their educational institution (Bourne et al., 2015).

A series of school conflicts linked to social interaction are at the origin of a great variety of intervention programs focused on the development of students' social skills (Gaymard and Andres, 2009). One factor that is widely incorporated in studies and programs is self-recognition, which is considered a tool that facilitates the integration of cognitive development levels, with integral moral criteria, with the application of practical reason to identify the value of the individual towards himself and others, motivating the development of will and decision making for conflict resolution. Therefore, self-recognition is taken as an imperative of practical principle to reduce situations of violence in schools, in which teachers, through the implementation of techniques and resources, evaluate and reflect on processes, value themselves and others in relation to the task of producing new knowledge, and generate social transformation (Olin et al., 2021).

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Kim and Lee (2021) assert that biopsychosocial and socioeconomic circumstances, such as workplace, home, and lifestyle, in addition to considering ecological states, such as age, marital status, education level, could be determinants in examining the effect of behavioral differences, which indicate the development of self-recognition. Figueroa (2020) and Pan and Zhou (2020) explain that self-recognition is a code of technology and of great importance for the sense of "self" that motivates "a certain deciphering of oneself", that is, self-observation of operations on one's own body, soul, thoughts, behavior, where one rediscovers oneself, thus modifying oneself in such a way that it constitutes transformational effects.

Nakamura et al. (2021) assert that self-recognition from self-observation, where learning is cognitively activated, would be associated with the acquisition of skills and the achievement of goals of the next level of learning for the efficacy and efficiency of a specific task. In association with the self-regulation of daily habits and psychological well-being, they constitute a theory of social justice (Lewis and Ramsay, 2004; Tajadura-Jiménez and Tsakiris, 2014), becoming the result of the experience with the environment and the social interaction of the individual, so that it is strongly influenced by the society in which he/she develops (Vygotsky, 1979).

Butler and Fraser (2017) state that individual self-realization, autonomy and self-regulation constitute the main objectives for conditioning equal treatment for all individuals, in addition to being a theory of social justice, since, when there is quality of intersubjective recognition relations, it facilitates the formation of a personal identity comprised of three equal forms of recognition, such as love, respect and social esteem. Regarding social intervention, Rodríguez Bustamante (2023) states that this should allow the application of a pedagogical structure with effective results, such as the composition of teams and the regulation of the rules of a game where analyses of interpreting the spaces of social interaction and cultural transfer that improve coexistence and, therefore, reduce violence, arise spontaneously (Pacheco Amigo et al., 2017).

According to Miranda Medina et al. (2022), conflict perception and coping skills have the characteristic of favoring a positive effect or improvement of cognitive abilities that generate an increase in intrinsic motivation, such as self-efficacy, resilience and self-determination, which allows improving students' development of mental strength, control and academic and physical performance in social intervention programs.

The educational context of Barranquilla has very variable characteristics, since the city is made up of a great mixture of cultures from different countries and Colombians from different regions who have arrived as victims of displacement due to violence, making it a receiving city. In addition, the internal war that has been going on in the country for more than sixty years has generated a culture of war that must be counteracted by the promotion of peace, healthy coexistence, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts through education.

Education in the country is divided between private and public, in the latter form, because it is free, its population tends to have a cultural capital in families lacking training that may be leaving the sole responsibility for the formation of values and cordial relations to the school. In private schools, families tend to have greater financial resources and are expected to have a higher socioeconomic level.



Therefore, there is a multiplicity of social and emotional factors that can be developed as skills for conflict resolution, which can be promoted or strengthened with social intervention programs, so it is necessary to analyze the effect generated by one of these programs on the skills of analysis and conflict resolution in public and private schools in Barranquilla. The following question arises from the above: what is the effect of a social intervention program on the skills and reasoning for observation and solution of school conflict in Colombia?

Therefore, the general objective of this study was to analyze the effect of a social intervention program on the skills and reasoning for observing and solving school conflict in Colombia in girls and boys aged 10 to 15 years in secondary schools in Barranquilla (Colombia), for which it was necessary to determine the effect of the social intervention on conflict resolution skills and on reasoning for observing the conflict.

In view of the above, the following hypotheses guide this study: The application of a social intervention program allows for the following:

- Ho: Pretest  $\leq$  Posttest Worsening or maintained conflict resolution skills.
- HA: Pretest  $>$  Posttest Improved conflict resolution skills.
- Ho: Pretest  $\leq$  Posttest Worsens or maintained reasoning to observe conflict.
- HA: Pretest  $>$  Posttest Improved reasoning to observe conflict.

This research highlights its importance by examining the impact of the application of a social intervention program to counteract violence in the increase of skills and reasoning to observe and resolve conflicts. On the other hand, from the results obtained, it is expected to contribute to teachers and students, since they show theoretical and practical references of an innovative methodology because it evidences how skills can be strengthened or improved through intervention. This work is important for conflict studies because it shows which elements can affect the interpretation and proposal of solutions to conflicts.

On the other hand, the Colombian educational system can benefit because the results of this research can encourage a change in the ways of solving conflicts in a peaceful manner, promoting healthy school coexistence and a culture of peace. This study provides data that can be replicated for the understanding of the theory of conflict resolution and peace.

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## Theoretical framework

The literature suggests that curricula integrate students' social-emotional skills within a science classroom (Ingram et al., 2021). School conflicts linked to social interaction are at the origin of a wide variety of intervention programs focused on the development of students' social skills (Gaynard and Andres, 2009). This process can

articulate with the innovations that both the Colombian legislation and contemporary education intend, generating awareness in the student of solutions through the concerted way, reaching agreements and conciliations to address the conflict (Velasco Moreno, 2021).

A new vision of the ability to teach prosocial behaviors can be created, becoming aware of the reality of children and the influence of various factors in their development, using a pedagogy of resilience, balancing cognition and emotion, and the ethics of care as a mechanism for peaceful school coexistence (Serrano Sarmiento and Sanz Ponce, 2019). Teachers need to deepen and comprise their personal values if they want to understand others, the values that teachers adopt and the advancement of teachers towards professional maturity will enhance their ability to be effective conflict managers (Msila, 2019).

School educational leaders felt that the conflict management strategies they employ are based on the nature, severity, and frequency of deviant social behavior exhibited by students (Bourne et al., 2015). With conflict resolution skills training, middle and high school students showed a decrease in levels of relational aggression, and high school students a decrease in levels of physical aggression and an increase in levels of effective communication and general knowledge about positive conflict resolution strategies (Graves et al., 2007).

In terms of school mediation, the importance of peer mediation training was identified suggesting that existing studies in the area of school conflict resolution and peer mediation can provide valuable information on the optimal configuration of programs for development and adoption in schools and other community settings (McWilliam, 2010). It is necessary to train all peer mediators, obtain teacher appraisal of mediation, and expand the role of mediation to other activities that can improve school coexistence, because satisfaction with mediation is generally lower (García-Raga et al., 2018).

Thus, self-recognition is among the esteem needs that involve self-respect and when satisfied, it supports the sense of life, as well as the valuation as an individual and professional, opening the way to self-realization, being the most advanced psychological need that allows the individual to develop individual and social abilities and skills to improve creativity, the acceptance of facts and the resolution of problems or conflicts.

On the other hand, Tajadura-Jiménez and Tsakiris (2014) have explored other results obtained for the study of self-recognition, where they state that in people with mental disorders, multisensory stimulation between one individual and another for the purpose of inducing changes in the representation of self-identity has predicted the malleability of self-representations in each individual in response to multisensory integration in behavioral responses, This has consequently explained that interoception plays a specific regulatory role in the self-recognition system.

It is necessary to mention that these results defend the view that interoceptive predictive coding models are adequate for monitoring and assigning sources of sensory information to self or others, as well as support the hypothesis of the insular cortex as a zone of convergence in the processing and global representation of the material self given the involvement in feelings.

interoceptive, multisensory integration and self-processing for the strengthening of self-awareness in the individual (Tajadura-Jiménez and Tsakiris, 2014).

The concept of self-recognition in the development of self-recognition and the use of tools such as personal pronouns and simulation games or role-playing has facilitated the relationship between these two activities to generate a meta-representation of the self in the child, in addition to favoring children's learning of skills that allow them to relate in a collaborative and harmonious way with their peers, which consequently is a facilitating element for the prevention of *bullying* in schools, since children acquire reality-based attitudes towards their own and others' actions and attitudes, which turns them into reflective children about the recognition of emotions of both others and themselves (Lewis and Ramsay, 2004; Vicente, 2018).

In view of the above, Moreno Aponte and Vila Merino (2022), as well as Thierry et al. (2022), mention that, based on activities aimed at stimulating self-recognition, a narrative dimension is created where dialogue increases the importance of the experience with the promise of self-recognition of oneself and others, building reciprocal identity and in constant evolution, which leads to fostering ethical environments, morality and otherness in the fields of the educational system, as well as improving personal skills that are fundamental for social awareness and the management of relationships with the environment.

Hou (2022) states that self-recognition plays an important role throughout life, especially during adolescence, and this is supported by a system of self-cognitive ability of Chinese adolescents based on the analysis of big data. According to the results obtained, it was found that the higher the educational level of the parents and the higher the monthly per capita income of the family, the higher the self-recognition ability in the adolescent.

On the other hand, Cwik and Singh (2021) argue that self-recognition increases adolescents' perception of the learning environment, as well as their sense of belonging, and increases interpersonal relationships. They demonstrated this theory using structural equation modeling based on interest in and identity for physics courses, finding that perception of the learning environment predicts outcomes and can be useful in creating an equitable and inclusive learning environment to guide all students to excel in algebra-supported physics courses.

Therefore, an intervention program constitutes a set of activities or practices that make possible, through the influence of the other, the recognition of one's own person, the increase of the perceptive capacity of the real context, the learning of diversity and human inclusion, as well as decision making for conflict resolution (Figueroa, 2020).

The results suggest that the concept of relaxation can be used from different perspectives and as a methodology that promotes the reduction of manifest symptoms of anxiety in boys and girls, the improvement of autonomous functions, initiative and autonomy, interactions with others, socioemotional development and short-term memory. Interventions based on relational methods in the school context, from a universal primary prevention perspective, contribute to a health-promoting school vision that favors the integral development of students and promotes life skills, as well as a better school coexistence.



Therefore, recent studies applied an intervention plan based on self-recognition in others for social problem solving and perspective taking in Settle Your Glitter applied to a group of boys and girls (Thierry et al., 2022). According to the authors, the results showed that the intervention students manifested better emotion to the self-recognition (Cohen's  $d = 0.38$ ) and problem solving (Cohen's  $d = 0.26$ ) test, due to a literacy training that teachers received, concluding that the skills are fundamental for social awareness and the management of social relationships.

In other studies, self-recognition has been worked on through a communicational plan with the objective of using the radio and its radiophonic task to teach a communicational strategy with the application of methodological and didactic actions that contribute to the self-recognition of the child's abilities and skills. Carranza Puicón and Requejo Goicochea (2019) found that children appreciate the importance of stimuli and influence in achieving their objectives.

In turn, in intervention work aimed at the need to prevent abuse among interpersonal relationships in adolescents, an adolescent relationship abuse/sexual violence (ARA/SV) prevention program was carried out based on trained coaches dialoguing with male athletes about what constitutes harmful versus respectful relationship behaviors, in addition to dispelling myths that glorify male sexual aggression and promoting more gender-equitable attitudes, and being a bystander when aggressive male behaviors toward females are observed, resulting in self-recognition, changes in what constitutes abusive behavior, intentions to intervene, and gender-equitable attitudes, as well as a reduction in the perpetration of abuse (Abebe et al., 2017).

Similarly, another antiviolence-based intervention project called "Resuélvelo, resuélvelo" was found, which was applied to children in small towns, based on a media campaign in which students served as models to represent local high school officials to carry out community activities. The children performed im- pressional, radio and television public service announcements in order to socialize and communicate social activities. Thus, self-recognition was evidenced in students in changing the intention of violence, physical aggression against people, verbal victimization, and perceived safety (Swaim and Kelly, 2008).

Similarly, Snyder et al. (2020) developed a prevention program called Dusk to Dawn (D2D), with the aim of improving self-recognition in high-risk situations and teaching new conflict resolution skills. In D2D, 108 youth participated, where 60% of the participants found satisfaction, 83.3% agreed or strongly agreed that D2D helped them to better understand violence and 83.3% would recommend it to others. It was concluded that the D2D contained discussion activities aimed at self-recognizing the effects of violence, being aware of the importance of family, friends, school and community in shaping the attitudes of young people by creating a motivation towards decreasing violence and resolving conflicts effectively.



## Methodology

### *Study design and data collection*

In this research, the quantitative method was applied, which, according to Rodríguez-Burgos (2010), comprises a series of processes that begin with the collection of information, which will later be related to the ideas that the researcher has in order to carry out the study.

The design is pre-experimental, applying a pretest and post-test questionnaire that is consistent with a burn in which a single group is studied after being subjected to the stimulus of some agent or treatment that is presumed to be capable of causing a change (Sánchez and Pineda, 2011). This design allows the concept of self-recognition in the value or condition of the dependent variable in the experimental group before being exposed to the intervention to be observed and measured beforehand by means of the pretest. Once the social intervention has been carried out, the questionnaire is applied again (posttest) to counteract the results obtained.

The instrument was structured on the basis of validated questionnaires from the PsycNet database. The questionnaire was adequate to determine the objectives of this study, that is, to relate the items to conflict resolution skills and reasoning to observe conflict in the school context. Once the items were selected, the questionnaire was submitted to external peer evaluation in order to validate its content. Subsequently, a pilot test was carried out to adapt the language for boys and girls aged 10 to 15 years, as well as the understanding of the items.

With respect to the structure of the questionnaire, it was organized into two variables, where the first, entitled conflict resolution skills, is based on two questionnaires that appear in PsycNet: PsycTest, Self-Perception of Flexible Coping with Stress Measure Version Attached: Full Test, PsycTESTS (Abebe et al., 2017), and the Stability, Empathy, Remorse, and Forgiveness Scales (Albor-Chadid, 2021; Davis and Gold 2011). While the second variable called reasoning to observe conflict is based on two questionnaires that appear in PsycNet: Perception of Aggression Scale--Chinese Version (Albor-Chadid, 2021; Franzoi et al., 1994; Wong and Chien, 2017).

Each variable is composed of eight items. The first, called conflict resolution skills, deals with learning and social influence, while the second, called reasoning to observe conflict, develops items related to peer communication and perceived individual strengths to resolve conflict.

Both variables were measured using a Likert scale with response options ranging from (1) total agreement to (5) total disagreement. The application and collection of information was carried out through Goo-Gle Forms. The internal validity of the instruments for the first one showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.720, while in the second one the participants rated on a perceptual analysis scale the way of reasoning and responding cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally to the situations of experiencing and observing a conflict with a Cronbach's alpha validity of 0.770. The statistical analysis was carried out by means of two computer programs, the first with SPSS *software* version 24.0 and the second with Jamovi *software* version 2.3.21.



### *Type of sampling and selection of participants*

A purposive sampling was used due to the nature of the study, since it is necessary to apply a stimulus and follow it up to identify significant differences in the reaction of the students to the social intervention. In addition, it is necessary that the participants meet certain formal requirements, such as being linked to an institution, to a specific course, in the same period, and ethical requirements, such as signing an informed and assisted consent form because they are minors. Given the age of the participants, it was necessary to obtain assisted consent from the guardian and informed consent from the student. Anyone who did not obtain any of the above consents or simply refused to participate did not participate.

In accordance with Resolution 8430 of 1993 of the Ministry of Health, given that all research procedures performed on human subjects require informed consent, this was applied in the following manner. Given the urgency of the covid-19 pandemic, the informed consent was applied to the parents or legal representative of the minor by virtual means, where the activities to be performed in the research and their relevance were explained and described to them, and thus, virtually, with the respective support of the educational institutions (IE), the concerns of the parents were considered so that their children could participate in the study. Therefore, the content of the research and the intention of the social intervention was described in detail, as well as a commitment was made with the parents that once the research was completed, the results should be socialized and published. In addition, according to Resolution 8430 of 1993, this project was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, due to the use of personal data of the participants. It should be noted that the study does not represent a risk to life, the environment or human rights; however, ethical guidelines in social science research are followed at a global level.

With respect to the definition of the sample, Barranquilla has 154 district educational institutions, distributed in four localities: North, Metropolitan, East and West. For the selection of the participating schools, the socioeconomic conditions of the institutions were considered, being chosen two from the public sector and one from the private sector, where it was possible to obtain information in an intelligible and dense manner. In addition, it should facilitate the possibility of capturing the daily life of the participants in a cultural spontaneity.

The selected students were in grades 6, 7 and 8 of secondary school in two district educational institutions and one private educational institution in Barranquilla, resulting in 81 students participating, with a population of 51.8% females and 48.2% males between the ages of 10 and 15 years old.

### *Intervention protocol*

The conflict resolution intervention program consisted of four sessions with scheduled activities lasting one hour, with a frequency of once a week. The sessions were divided into an introduction, presentation, training and closing. Their description is shown in Table 1, where dates, start and end times were programmed. The activities were taught under the virtual modality by connectivity using information and communication technologies (ICT) with the use of Zoom and Teams. It should be noted that prior to the in-



The pretest and posttest were applied at the end of the intervention to analyze the impact of the program based on self-recognition to reduce school violence (Albor-Chadid, 2021; Sanchez and Pineda, 2011).

**Table 1.**  
*Social intervention program for conflict resolution*

ETAPAS	PROGRAMA DE INTERVENCIÓN SOCIAL BASADO EN EL AUTORRECONOCIMIENTO PARA LA SOLUCIÓN DE CONFLICTOS.							
				Actividades		Productos Esperados		
			Población	Acciones	Propósitos	Definir Objetivos	Fuentes de Verificación	Supuestos/Factores
Exploración/Ejecución/Evaluación	Observación del objeto de estudio (precisar situación real para dar solución al problema)	Aplicación del Diagnóstico Participativo	I N S T I T U C I O N E S E D U C A T I V A S	Presentación concepto de el conflicto. 1. Hechos, 2. Causas, 3. Consecuencias, 4. Solución Aplicar cuestionario	Focalizar el autorreconocimiento, la atención del estudiante en comprender el significado del concepto de conflicto.	Definir el concepto de conflicto	Grabación de talleres	Conexión internet
				Taller Actividad "La Flor del Conflicto"	Motivar al estudiante a observar las características que tiene el conflicto y analizarlas	Debatir sobre las características del conflicto: su distinción respecto a la violencia y su carácter natural, inevitable, necesario y potencialmente positivo.		
	Análisis fuente de información (tener el trasfondo y significado teórico del objeto de investigación, marco teórico). Consulta base de los datos especializados.	Intervención en la conducta por medio de la mediación				Practicar la evaluación de soluciones y la toma de decisiones por acuerdo entre las partes en un caso de mediación. Analizar las condiciones que permitan obtener acuerdos justos y eficaces.		
				Taller "El Comic"	Presentar socialización historietas y Aplicación Instrumento Cuantitativo	Asumir nuevas autodeterminaciones para afrontar los conflictos		

Source: Own elaboration.

The topics addressed during the sessions included activities in relation to the following themes:

- "The flower of conflict" activity in which a description was made of conflict situations occurring in the family, school and neighborhood;
- "The comic" activity in which the student narrates a story and his or her self-determination in facing conflicts and
- reflections on the concept of *conflict* in each situation and alternative solutions (Albor-Chadid, 2021).

### Data analysis

To begin with, a Cronbach's alpha test is performed in order to validate the items applied in the questionnaire, after which a normality test of the data is performed in order to perform the corresponding statistical analysis, being in this case data with non-normal distribution, which will be explained in detail.



in the next section, to finish with a Shapiro-Wilcoxon  $W$  test for related samples to compare the means and verify the effect of the social intervention by testing whether the difference obtained from the means is significant.

## Results

The descriptive results obtained were as follows. From the sociodemographic data, it was obtained that a percentage of students corresponded to the female gender, 50.6%, while 49.4% corresponded to the male gender in grades 6, 7 and 8 of the basic secondary level. The average age of the subjects was 12.35 years. The total number of students who participated and completed the social intervention program was 81 participants (Table 2).

**Table 2.**  
*Sociodemographic data*

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	41	50,6
Male	40	49,4
<b>Age</b>		
10-12	48	59,2
13-15	33	40,8
<b>Level of education</b>		
6	29	35,8
7	23	28,4
8	29	35,8
<b>Educational Institution</b>		
Antonio José de Sucre	21	25,9
St. Pancrazio Archdiocese of San Pancrazio	32	39,5
Institución Educativa Distrital del Desarrollo Humano y Cultural del Caribe (District Educational Institution for the Human and Cultural Development of the Caribbean)	28	34,6

*Source:* Own elaboration based on statistical analysis in SPSS.

Normality tests are performed by testing the following hypotheses:

$H_0$ : the data behave normally.

$H_a$ : data does not behave normally

Based on the statistical tests to measure the normality of both variables, the data in Table 3 were plotted, which will be described precisely for both variables: conflict resolution skills and reasoning to observe the conflict.



**Table 3.***Normality test for conflict resolution skills and reasoning*

Variable	P value	Alpha	Decision	Conclusion	Type of statistical test
<b>Conflict resolution skills</b>					Wilcoxon of related samples
Pretest experimental group	0,001<	0,05	Ho is rejected	Not normal	
Posttest experimental group	0,001<	0,05	Ho is rejected	Not normal	
<b>Reasoning for observing the conflict</b>					Wilcoxon of related samples
Pretest experimental group	0,001<	0,05	Ho is rejected	Not normal	

*Source:* Own elaboration.

As can be seen in Table 3, for the conflict resolution skills variable, the pretest and posttest normality tests are performed, with results that the p-values are 0.001, which is a value less than 0.05, which is what is being verified for a value of 95.0%.

Therefore, for this variable the Ho is rejected, having, then, that the data have a non-normal distribution, so it is necessary to perform a Wilcoxon test for related samples.

For the variable of reasoning to observe the conflict, it was obtained as a result for the pretest and posttest normality test that the p values are 0.001, being this a value less than 0.05, seeking a confidence of the results of 95 %. Therefore, for this variable the Ho is also rejected, corroborating that the data have a non-normal distribution, so it is necessary to perform a Wilcoxon test for related samples, as with the previous variable.

### ***Conflict resolution skills***

Based on the results of the normality of the data, the Wilcoxon W statistic was performed for both variables, and the corresponding hypothesis tests were performed.

The effect of social intervention to improve conflict resolution skills: Ho: Pretest  $\leq$  Posttest

Worsens or maintains conflict resolution skills HA: Pretest  $>$  Posttest Improves conflict resolution skills.

According to the descriptive results obtained in the test, it can be observed that the mean values are 2.43 in the pretest with a standard deviation of 0.523, while a value of 2.17 is presented in the posttest with a standard deviation of 0.628, and the value of the medians in both cases is 2.

**Table 4.***Descriptive and statistical results of conflict resolution skills.*

	N	Media	Median	DE	EE
Conflict resolution pre-skills	81	2,43	2	0,523	0,0581
Conflict resolution skills	81	2,17	2	0,628	0,0698

**T-test for paired samples**

		Statistician	P	Effect size
Conflict resolution pre-skills	Conflict resolution skills	W for Wilcoxon	466 a 0.002	Biserial correlation of ranks 0,566

Note.  $H_0: \mu \text{ Measurement 1} - \text{Measurement 2} \neq 0$

\*47 pair(s) of values were repeated.

Source: Own elaboration.

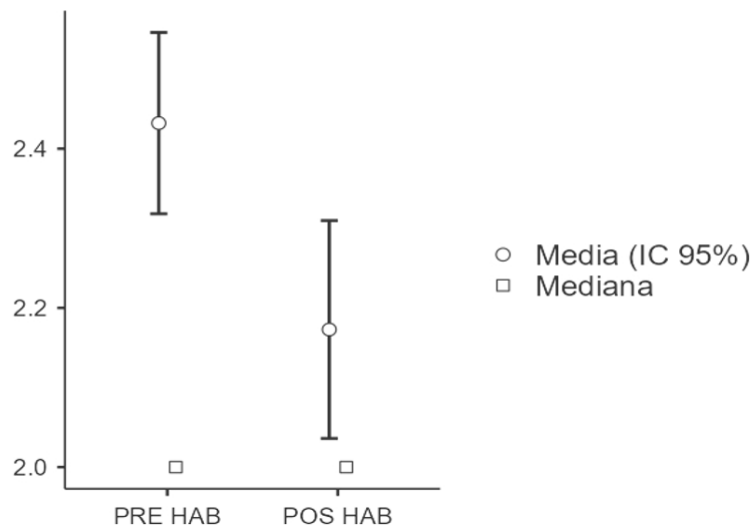
With respect to the test statistic, Wilcoxon's W, a result of 466 with an effect size of 0.566 can be observed, as shown in Table 4. The result of the effect size indicates that there is a medium improvement in the skills developed by the students for conflict resolution; however, it should be considered that, since it is a social intervention, better results can be obtained in the long term, giving continuity to the social intervention program.

Therefore, according to the hypothesis posed for the conflict resolution skills variable, it can be observed that the pretest mean value is 2.43 and the posttest value is 2.17, with a p value of  $0.002 < 0.05$ , so we can conclude that for this variable the  $H_0$  is rejected. Therefore, at 95% confidence, the pretest is higher than the posttest, i.e., there is evidence of an improvement in the conflict resolution skills of the students when they receive the social intervention.

Finally, the results are shown in Figure 1, where it can be seen how the value of the mean decreases, according to the statistical results that this difference in the value of the mean is significant, although the value of the median is maintained.

**Figure 1.**

*Descriptive results of conflict resolution skills.*



Source: Own elaboration.



### Reasoning for observing the conflict

For this variable, the following hypotheses are presented:

The effect of social intervention to improve conflict-observing reasoning: Ho: Pretest  $\leq$

Posttest Worsens or maintains conflict-observing reasoning HA: Pretest  $>$  Posttest

Improves conflict-observing reasoning.

According to the descriptive results obtained in the test, it can be observed that the mean values are 2.27 in the pretest with a standard deviation of 0.475, while a value of 1.86 is presented in the posttest with a standard deviation of 0.737, and the value of the medians in both cases is 2.

With respect to the test statistic, Wilcoxon's W, a result of 720 with an effect size of 0.846 can be observed, as shown in Table 5. Given the result of the effect size, that is, a value greater than 0.80, indicates that there is a great improvement in the students' reasoning to observe the conflict upon receiving the social intervention, so that, if a long-term program were implemented, it could generate a permanent effect on the students. Table 5 presents the results described above.

**Table 6.**  
*Descriptive and statistical results of reasoning to observe the conflict.*

	N	Average	Median	DE	EE
Pre-reasoning for observing the conflict	81	2,27	2	0,475	00,0527
Post-reasoning to observe the conflict	81	1,86	2	0,475	0,0819
<b>T-test for paired samples</b>					
		Statistician	P	Effect size	
Pre-reasoning for observe the conflict	Post-reasoning to observe the conflict	W of 720 to Wilcoxon	<0.001	Correlation range biseriation	00,846

Note.  $H_0 \mu$  Measurement 1 - Measurement 2  $\neq$  0

<sup>a</sup> 47 pair(s) of values were repeated.

Source: Own elaboration.

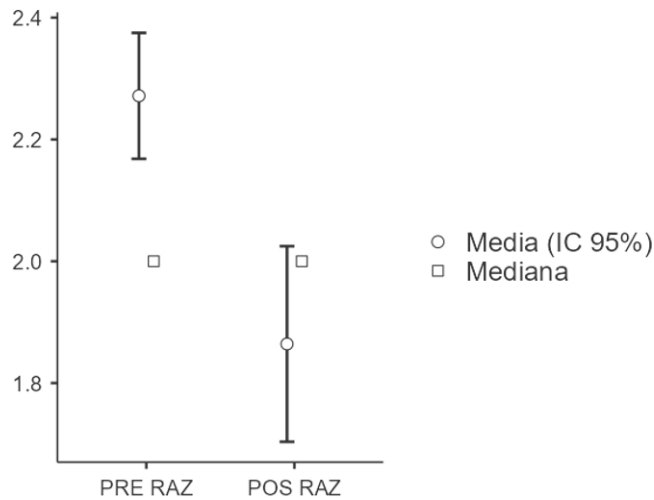
Therefore, according to the hypothesis posed for the variable reasoning to observe the conflict, it can be observed that the pretest mean value was 2.27, while the posttest mean value is 1.86, this difference being greater than that of the previous variable, and with a p value of  $0.001 < 0.05$ , so the Ho is rejected. Therefore, at 95 % confidence, the pretest is greater than the posttest, that is, there is evidence of an improvement in the students' reasoning to observe the conflict upon receiving the social intervention.

As for the graphical representation of the values obtained, it can be seen how the mean value decreased significantly, while the median value remains stable, which shows that better results can be obtained in the long term, giving continuity to the intervention program (Figure 2).





**Figure 2.**  
*Descriptive results of reasoning for observing the conflict*



Source: Own elaboration.

## Discussion

The findings of this study confirm what was proposed by Graves et al. (2007), who concluded that with conflict resolution skills training, students showed a decrease in their levels of relational aggression and physical aggression, as well as an increase in their levels of effective communication and general knowledge of positive conflict resolution strategies.

The conclusions are also related to the proposal of Serrano Sarmiento and Sanz Ponce (2019), who concluded that a new vision of the ability to teach pro-social behaviors, awareness of the reality of children and the influence of various factors on their development, the use of a pedagogy of resilience, balancing cognition and emotion, and the ethics of care, can be created as a mechanism for peaceful school coexistence. For their part, Gaymard and Andres (2009) estimate that school conflicts linked to social interaction are at the origin of a wide variety of intervention programs focused on the development of students' social skills and, furthermore, that the conflict management strategies they employ are based on the nature, severity and frequency of the deviant social behavior exhibited by students (Bourne et al., 2015). Likewise, Lacan (2004) exposes the concept of school violence, because of the approximation of ages, children at first explored spaces, times and their own characteristics to self-recognize fragments of that which they did not yet perceive of the conflict.

Figuroa (2020) affirms that activities or practices are influential for the self-recognition of the person in their thoughts, which increases the perceptive capabilities of their own context; learning about diversity and human inclusion and decision making for conflict resolution is aligned with the conclusions developed from the results of this study. For their part, Snyder et al. (2020) concluded that, with social intervention programs based on self-recognition aimed at recognizing the effects of violence, the adolescents agreed that



the program helped them to better understand violence. Also as proposed by Cwik and Singh (2021), who argue that self-recognition increases adolescents' perception of their learning environment, in addition to their sense of belonging and increased interpersonal relationships.

All of the above takes place within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 4 and 16 in goals 4.7 and 16.a, respectively, which promote that children learn to solve conflicts through dialogue and that education management can generate spaces for healthy, equitable and inclusive coexistence that promote a culture of peace and prevention of violence.

## Conclusions

It should be noted that the results of the social intervention in this research were an increase in the skills and reasoning for the observation and solution of school conflict in Colombia in girls and boys from 10 to 15 years old in secondary schools in Barranquilla, measuring the effect of the social intervention in the skills to solve the conflict and in the reasoning to observe the conflict.

The results allow us to conclude that the skills and reasoning to observe and solve conflicts can be modified through the effect caused by the stimulus generated by the activities that make up a social intervention program based on self-recognition that seeks to enhance critical thinking, the analysis of the factors that make up the conflict and the contribution of possible solutions by the students.

Another conclusion drawn from the results of this study is that the variable that had the greatest effect on the stimulus generated by the social intervention program was the reasoning for observing the conflict, which shows that the students have a well-developed perspective of reality that can be capitalized on in the process of deconstructing conflicts and analyzing their components.

Regarding the variable of conflict resolution skills, it can be concluded that the application of the program needs to be evaluated over a longer period of time to corroborate the effect generated by the stimulus of the social intervention program, which shows that the population needs to be exposed to a greater extent to decision-making activities and to acting in conflictive situations.

This is how the observed group integrates from their own natural abilities to resolve conflict situations as a conscious experience, observing and contrasting it with reality, and what is an unpleasant situation. In fact, the group also recognizes that, when they are in a conflict situation, they can do or think many different things to resolve it. This could be described as, before the approach of perceiving and becoming aware of the conflict, inferring a sensitive experience of thoughts, images before the phenomenon of school violence.

Given the principle of the group's particular self-recognition of the phenomenon, sociodemographic factors, such as age, sex and school grade, were considered to provide a better understanding of the particular event of school violence.



In addition, it is important to note that, faced with a stimulus generated by the social intervention program, the skills to resolve conflicts and their own reasoning to observe the conflict, the group made generalizations through the application of the pretest, which implied a beginning of reflection and intrinsically a motivational outburst for the exploration of the causes and effects of school violence.

Subsequently, analyzing the influence of the social intervention program, cognitive and behavioral changes were found that allowed the group to recognize, group and construct adequate phenomena for conflict resolution. The group, when exposed to the intervention, it can be concluded that they explored and recognized school conflicts in time, space and reality, which inspired them to design different strategies to solve conflict situations, tracing in each session the causes that generate conflict at school, which made them generalize that conflict is an unpleasant situation.

In terms of tools, school mediation can be an effective element to foster students' conflict analysis and resolution skills.

It is also concluded that from the same social and behavioral response reasons that occur around the phenomenon of school conflict, the strengthening of skills applied through a social intervention program allows purifying thoughts through multisensory awareness as a biological regulatory phenomenon, so that once transformed, they become a natural process in the generation of conflict resolution and improvement in school coexistence.

### Limitations and suggestions for future research

The limitations of this study are that the process was carried out during the epidemic, and that it only took place in one city in Colombia and could be extended to other departments of the country. In addition, the time of the intervention was short and its results showed the need to continue extending the time and activities of the program.

It is suggested that the intervention process be expanded in relation to training in other conflict resolution skills and tools that lead students to contrast theory, knowledge, experiences and reality, promoting the emergence of innovative solutions to school conflicts. It is suggested that these programs be institutionalized both in public policies and in school actions that lead to the promotion of a culture of peaceful conflict resolution that contribute to the dismantling of the prevailing culture of war in society and improve school coexistence in educational institutions.

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### **Conflicts of interest**

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest with the subject matter, the process, the methodology used, or the results obtained.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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